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ARGENTINE CATTLE KINGS.

Their Cowboys Can Not Compare With
Ours—After Tying a Steer a Surgical
Operation is Necessary to
Release it.

The pampas of Argentina correspond closely to the Mississippi valley of the states and the great plains of the Canadian northwest, but on a showdown they would prove far truer to the name of "plains" than anything we have north of the Isthmus of Panama. Nowhere else in the world is there so large an area that approaches so near to an absolute level as do the pampas. The exigencies of the railroad building best illustrates this fact. Look at the large scale map of any of the flattest of our middle western states and observe how no red line, representing a railroad, holds to a straighter course than that of a row of children playing hippity-hop across a broad lawn. This is because the country is not level; the curves are to reduce a gradient that cannot be avoided by cuts or fills. Now look at a railroad map of Argentina and see how the lines radiate from Buenos Ayres like the spokes to a wheel. Whether northwest to Rosario and Cardoba, west to the Andes, southwest to the Pampa Central or south to Mar del Plata and Bahia Blanca, their course is invariably almost perfectly direct. The Buenos Ayres and Pacific railway has the longest "straight" in the world, where between Vedia and Mackenna, in the heart of the pampa, the rails run for 175 miles without an inch of curve, and but for an "S" at the former place, would continue so for 206 miles. This is indicative of the real thing in level land.

To the average inhabitant of the pampas a gentle swell on the bosom of the plain is a thing of interest, and a hill a thing to revere.

The pampas of today are not the pampas of thirty years ago. Then the prevailing pursuits were pastoral; now those horticultural take the lead, and are rapidly increasing in importance. Formerly, master and man lived alike, both in mud huts and on a diet of carne asado, gallentia and mate. Now, all this is for the peons, while the master divides the time between his palatial estancia and Buenos Ayres and Europe. Probably nowhere else in the world, certainly not outside the great cities, is there so great a gulf between the standard of living of the highest and the lowest. Nowhere have I seen such lavishly run establishments as those of these land kings of Argentina, both native and British, and nowhere among Caucasians have I seen such primitive quarters and such hard living as among the peons and gauchos of the same country. The eight or ten weeks that I have spent in various parts of the pampas were almost equally divided between these diametrically opposite ways of living, giving me all the advantage of sharp contrast in showing the one up against the other. It is an amusing and rather novel experience to sit with the knees under a mahogany and sip French wine from a glass of Mauze crystal one day, and the next to hunch up on a horse skull stool and suck mate through a bombilla that has been in a dozen other mouths before it comes to you; or perhaps to have imported English lamb chops and French peas for 11 o'clock breakfast, and for 5 o'clock dinner a hunk of smoky, greasy carne asado cooked on a steel spike in the midst of an open fire, and eaten by holding in the hands and rending with the teeth. But whatever and by whomsoever dispensed, it was tendered with a free and unforced kindness that reduced it all to the same level.

Talking with an Englishman in Bahia Blanca a while ago, he divided his countrymen who owned estancias in the pampas into two classes: Those who were gentlemen when they came to the country, and those who were not gentlemen when they came to the country, but had since become such through the accession of wealth following their foresight and good management. The definition of gentlemen herein implied may be somewhat open to question, otherwise the statement gives a very good idea of the situation. They are all gentlemen; only part of them came ready made and the others made themselves. I met many of both classes and as hosts I would say that neither leave anything to be desired; as practical farmers, those of the acquired gentility seem to have rather the better of it. The latter do not return to England every summer on a visit, have fewer fads and fancies, will use American machinery when it is proved to them that it will do twice as much work with less men than the English, and in many other ways display more "horse sense" than the born gentlemen. Most of these are making money, too, because they cannot help it, rather than for any other reason. They farm as gentlemen farm in England, and their kennels and stables and fancy cattle, and their imposing but antiquated agricultural machinery are responsible for a substantial deficit every year, a deficit which, however, their thousands of hectares of land to Italian tenantry regularly make good, and with some to spare. Over and above this, the steadily increasing value of their lands, incident to the growth of the country, is doubling and trebling their wealth every few years.

There is nothing like an Argentine grain train anywhere else in the world and the sight of one on the move is alone worth a trip to the pampa. They are specially designed for this country, and could be used in no other. One of them would be far too wide to pass through an English lane, far too long to turn an ordinary cross-road corner in the states, and far too heavy to be used in any country where horses were not at bedrock prices. A good sized wagon will be from forty to fifty feet long and from twelve to fourteen feet high, and the driver's seat twenty feet and more the ground. The horses used to appear innumerable, and actually at times run above two and three-score. They are driven either by the "jerk-line" system, common in Southern California and the San Joaquin valley or by rein run out to the leading pair. The capacity of one of these vehicles is enormous, and the general rule of "a wagon load makes a car load" will not often be found amiss. The principal idea of so large a wagon is to have something that will not be engulfed by the mud or dust of the bottomless roads of the pampas, but it also has its economic advantages in a country where men are scarce and horses plentiful.

The gaucho of the pampas is the counterpart of our cowboy of the plains and the boundary rider of the Australian "back block," and he is in many ways quite as attractive a character as either of his brothers. His worst fault seems to be his extreme carelessness in regard to the lives of those around him; but as he is equally careless of his own I cannot see where this can logically be held against him. As a handler of stock he is possibly the peer of a Queensland drover, but is certainly not to be mentioned in the same breath with a Texas, Arizona or Montana cowboy, nor with the best of Mexican vaqueros. I had arrived at this conclusion in my own mind from the first time I had seen what were said to be expert gauchos working out at a round-up; hence I was

more pleased when, not long ago, a bunch of half a dozen Texas cowboys came to this country on an exhibition tour and demonstrated to the satisfaction of everybody that, both in method and execution, in the handling of cattle and horses, the North American is far superior to the South American.

I say demonstrated to the satisfaction of everybody; as a matter of fact it was to the extreme satisfaction of every one but the Anglo-Saxons. The average Argentine is quite lacking in anything resembling a sporting instinct and he took it very hard when he saw his representatives so completely outclassed in a kind of work he had fondly imagined in his ignorance that they were supreme. In no branch of their work did the cowboys not make the gauchos appear fairly ludicrous in comparison. In roping and tying, and at breaking and riding untamed steers, horses and mules, the work of the Americans was neat and expeditious; that of the Argentines and Uruguayans clumsy and slow. A cowboy would rope and tie a steer in from thirty to forty seconds, so deftly that it would be released by a single pull, where the gaucho would spend five minutes smothering the animal in a coil of rope, from which a surgical operation was usually required to release it. Buenos Ayreans found the dose a hard one to swallow, but the best of them finally got it down and admitted that their men were outclassed at their own game.—Los Angeles Times.

FRISCO HUMOR.

How the Spirit of the People Manifested Itself in Hour of Trial.

The spirit of the San Francisco people after the great disaster expressed itself in lighter ways, writes French Strother in the July World's Work. A steel building on Van Ness Avenue, with every window space gaping from a gutted interior bore a freshly painted sign: "The Hotel Baltimore is now 'open' for business."

It was—wide open. In front of every house was a stove set up in the street and shielded from the wind, because no fires were allowed in the house until the chimneys could be inspected. These windbreaks almost invariably bore some jocular legend. Some were named "Zinkand's" or "Tait's" or "The Poodle Dog," after famous restaurants of the city. One sign read "Well Shaken" and below it a finger pointed to the next shack, on which was painted "Same Alive." There were dozens of "Happy Homes." In San Jose I saw a building, completely wrecked, from which a sign announced that "E. W. Jack had been 'earthquaked' to 15 West St. John Street (just around the corner," and another, "From these ruins will rise San Jose's greatest grocery store."

But perhaps the most effective expression I saw of the spirit with which losses were borne was on a street car in Devisadero Street. A well-dressed young woman recognized a young man standing by a seat several feet away.

"Burned out?" she inquired. He smiled pleasantly and answered quite simply "Yes." Nothing more was said.

Excursion Rates.

Account meeting Sheriff's association at Dallas, Texas, August 9-11, round trip tickets will be sold on August 7 and 8 at \$21.70 limited for return August 13.

Account meeting Grand Lodge A. O. U. W. at San Antonio, July 24-26, round trip tickets will be sold July 21 and 22, at \$10.85 limited for return on July 28.

Child's rate one half of adult rate.

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